

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claims 8 through 15.

Please amend claim 2 as follows:

1. (ORIGINAL)        A hitch cover assembly for a vehicle comprising:

a hitch tube for connection to vehicle structure of a vehicle;

a cover member extending transversely along the vehicle and having a first aperture extending therethrough to expose said hitch tube;

a hitch insert having a second aperture extending longitudinally therethrough to fit over said hitch tube; and

a door pivotally connected to said hitch insert for closing and opening said second aperture; and

an electrically controlled locking mechanism to removably lock said hitch insert to said hitch tube.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED)        A hitch cover assembly as set forth in claim

1 wherein said electronically controlled locking ~~pin~~ mechanism comprises a locking pin and an actuator operatively connected to said locking pin.

3. (ORIGINAL)        A hitch cover assembly comprising:

a hitch insert having an aperture extending longitudinally therethrough to fit over a hitch tube of a hitch on a vehicle;

a rotatable door connected to said hitch insert for closing and opening said aperture; and

an electrically controlled locking pin mechanism adapted to extend through the hitch tube and said hitch insert.

4. (ORIGINAL)      A hitch cover assembly as set forth in claim 3 wherein said electrically controlled locking pin mechanism comprises a locking pin.

5. (ORIGINAL)      A hitch cover assembly as set forth in claim 4 wherein said electrically controlled locking pin mechanism includes an actuator operatively connected to said locking pin.

6. (ORIGINAL)      A hitch cover assembly as set forth in claim 5 wherein said electrically controlled locking pin mechanism includes a switch operatively connected to said actuator and located in an interior of the vehicle.

7. (ORIGINAL)      A hitch cover assembly as set forth in claim 5 wherein said electrically controlled locking pin mechanism includes a switch operatively connected to said actuator and located near said actuator.

8. (CANCELED)

9. (CANCELED)

10. (CANCELED)

11. (CANCELED)

12. (CANCELED)

13. (CANCELED)

14. (CANCELED)

15. (CANCELED)

Please add new claims 16 and 17 as follows:

16. (NEW) A hitch cover assembly for a vehicle comprising:

a cover member adapted to extend transversely along the vehicle and having a first aperture extending therethrough to expose a hitch tube of the vehicle;

a hitch insert having a second aperture extending longitudinally therethrough and adapted to fit over the hitch tube;

a door pivotally connected to said hitch insert for closing and opening said second aperture; and

an electrically controlled locking mechanism adapted to removably lock said hitch insert to the hitch tube.

17. (NEW) A hitch cover assembly for a vehicle comprising:

a hitch insert having an aperture extending longitudinally therethrough and adapted to fit over a hitch tube of the vehicle;

a door pivotally connected to said hitch insert for closing and opening said aperture; and

an electrically controlled locking mechanism adapted to removably lock said hitch insert to the hitch tube.